

## ALL-GENDER RESTROOMS MEMO –SECOND DRAFT

Dear Interim Dean Lang,

Over the 2018-2019 academic year, the College Academic Council has been examining the issue of all-gender restrooms on KU's Lawrence campus. We write you today seeking the support of the Dean's Office for a critical increase in the number of single-use, all-gender restrooms on campus. We ask that you endorse and forward our appeal onto Interim Provost Carl Lejuez and his office.

Advocacy for this issue grew out of a charge issued the previous year by then-Dean Lejuez, who asked the College Academic Council to investigate and reimagine family-focused policies affecting KU faculty and students. This year, the Council turned its attention to the more expansive issue of all-gender restrooms. Our members listened to presentations from Saida Bonifield, Director, Center for Sexuality and Gender Diversity and James Modig, University Architect; read reports issued by KU Design and Construction Management (2016) and the Gender Inclusive Restroom Workgroup (2017); and solicited comments and suggestions from Kevin Smith, Dean of the Libraries, who has successfully implemented all-gender restrooms in Anschutz, Watson, and Spencer Research Libraries. The Council has concluded that access to safe, inclusive restrooms is critical for academic success and the overall well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

While all-gender restrooms do exist on the Lawrence campus, they are difficult to access and unevenly distributed to serve the needs of the KU community and its visitors. Moreover, there is no master list of all-gender restrooms on campus, leaving those with special needs to uncomfortably search for appropriate facilities. Troubling, the invisibility of all-gender restrooms is symptomatic of the prejudicial structures experienced by minority groups and underserved groups on KU's campus. The 2016 KU Campus Climate Survey revealed that only 9% of transpectrum respondents expressed feeling "very comfortable" with the overall climate at KU. In contrast, 37% of transpectrum respondents reported that they had experienced, "exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct" (Campus Climate Research Study Executive Summary: x, v). Safety and accessibility are priorities for our entire community. All-gender restrooms benefit not only gender non-conforming persons, but also those with accompanying children or caregivers. Affirming the importance of all-gender restrooms and taking actionable steps to increase their number on campus will keep KU in step with our peer institutions and signal a welcoming environment for our current community as well as prospective students and employees.

Considerable administrative resources have already been devoted to this issue; but with no tangible outcomes. Both the DCM and Restroom Workgroup reports have identified buildings (Haworth, Malott, Snow, Summerfield, and Twente) in which minor modifications of negligible cost would result in "exponential" benefits (Gender Inclusive Restroom Workgroup: 3). Both of these reports have outlined recommendations for immediate, medium-, and long-term improvements. The College Academic Council calls on the Office of the Provost to implement the Category I building modifications, delineated in the 2017 Gender Inclusive Restroom Report, no later than Spring 2020, with further improvements in subsequent years. This is an issue with

wide support among students, faculty, and staff. An increase in the number of all-gender restrooms across the Lawrence campus will ensure that KU remains a rewarding and inclusive place to learn and work.

Regards,  
The College Academic Council